

As a licensed amateur radio operator, I would like to express my support for the proposed change to the 97.113(e) rule that currently permits amateur retransmission of NASA manned shuttle communications. I concur with the proposed more flexible wording in this rule to permit amateur retransmissions that would include the evolving NASA mission, particularly as it now relates to the International Space Station (ISS). I am an active member and Director of the Waco Amateur Television Society (WATS) and, with the requisite written permission from NASA, we have been privileged to retransmit NASA-TV coverage of space shuttle missions to our fellow WATS members and other amateur radio operators in the McLennan County, Texas area. The cable-TV services in this area have chosen NOT to include NASA-TV in their offerings, and so without a backyard satellite dish and receiver, essentially all members of our community are deprived of the excellent mission coverage afforded by NASA-TV. I suspect that this is also a common condition in other communities across the country. Here, in Waco, TX, we use amateur television to retransmit selected portions of the NASA-TV coverage of space shuttle missions. However, we have noted several instances of recent ISS activities of interest that we would have liked to similarly retransmit, but were not technically authorized to do since it did not involve the a space shuttle. While we feel that doing so would likely fall within the "spirit" of the law, we would prefer that it be more specifically approved in the wording of 7.113(e). Thank you. (submitted by John L. Gafford, N5XAK)